

Claim 17 requires, *inter alia*, “employing an etching process to form a planar cutting element ..., and forming a guard element from the wafer of single crystal material by the etching process.” In the office action, the Examiner characterizes element 10 shown in the Erdmann figures as “guard element 10.” Applicants respectfully submit that this is not an accurate characterization. Referring to the translation submitted herewith, at p. 3, 11 lines from the bottom, Erdmann refers to this element as “shearing blade edge 10.” Nor is there anything else in Erdmann that would suggest that this or any other part of the shearing blade described by Erdmann functions as a guard. Instead, Erdmann’s figures show only silicon disks (see the description of Erdmann’s figures at p. 3 of the translation), not finished razors, and Erdmann appears to relate solely to the manufacture of the blade portion of a razor.

Moreover, the area that the leadline for reference number 10 points to is not “formed by etching” – on the contrary, it is an unetched area of the silicon disk that has been protected from etching by photoresist 3.

Thus, Erdmann cannot anticipate Applicants’ claims.

Claims 19 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C 103 as being unpatentable over Erdmann in view of what the Examiner asserts to be “Applicant’s admitted prior art.” These claims depend from claim 17, and thus are patentable for at least the reasons discussed above.

The fact that the Applicants have stated arguments with respect to certain positions of the Examiner, does not mean that the Applicants concede any other positions of the Examiner. Moreover, the fact that the Applicants have made arguments for patentability of certain claims does not mean that there are not other good arguments for patentability of those claims or other claims.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103 be withdrawn.

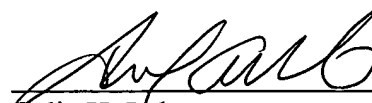
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Serial No. : 10/692,136  
Filed : October 23, 2003  
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Attorney's Docket No.: 00216-645002 / 4255A

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney  
Docket No. 00216-645002.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 16, 2004



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